

## **Mayor Coleman Says State Should Keep Its Promise to Pay for Essential Local Services**

COLUMBUS - Mayor Michael B. Coleman encouraged state leaders to use newly found state dollars to provide local government with the adequate resources to provide basic city services.

Gov. Bob Taft's administration told state lawmakers crafting a two-year \$51 billion state budget that it should provide aid to cities, counties, villages and libraries at the same rate as they did in 2005. The current spending plan calls for cuts or more than \$200 million to local governments, including 20 percent cuts to city government.

**"The Local Government Fund partnership with the State has existed for 70 years, funding basic services like Police protection and Fire-fighters. It would be a dramatic mistake for the State of Ohio to abdicate their responsibility to the millions of citizens who live and work in our cities, towns and villages," said Mayor Michael B. Coleman. "These funds protect all Ohioans, and we are pleased to learn that Governor Taft changed course to join Ohio's Mayors, County Commissioners, Police Officers and Firefighters in urging the Legislature to not cut the Local Government Fund."**

While the Ohio Senate recently made a minor change to the initial LGF cuts proposed by the Governor and Ohio House, some 66 cities in Ohio that receive more than \$1 million would have received almost no relief. The cuts would have cost the City of Columbus an estimated \$15 million by the end of 2006 from a City operating budget that devotes more than 70 percent of its funds to public safety.

A joint House-Senate Conference Committee is considering the plan and how to dedicate an additional \$451 million in 2007 and extra \$437 million in 2008. Coleman said those lawmakers should quickly adopt the administration's proposal before addressing other parts of the budget bill.